

**Amendment to the Specification:**

Please replace the entire paragraph 1 on page 1, lines 1-7 with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The present invention relates to novel hepatitis C virus ("HCV") protease inhibitors, pharmaceutical compositions containing one or more such inhibitors, methods of preparing such inhibitors and methods of using such inhibitors to treat hepatitis C and related disorders. This invention specifically discloses diaryl peptide compounds as inhibitors of the HCV NS3/NS4a serine protease. This application claims priority from provisional application, Serial No. 60/254,869 filed December 12, 2000. --